

SECRET/SENSITIVE

OSS-142-74
18 January 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Case 61401 - CIA Operative in El Salvador

REFS : A.) MIM-006-74, 4 January 1974
B.) TWX DCD/Washington 96860, 16 January 1974
C.) [redacted] /MacVane telecon 16 January 1974
D.) [redacted] /MacVane telecon 17 January 1974
E.) [redacted] /Mainwaring telecon 17 January 1974
F.) TWX DCD/Miami 12475, 17 January 1974
G.) TWX DCD/Miami 12476, 17 January 1974

1. One of our sources in Miami, Joseph Merola, revealed the name and position of an individual reported to be an Agency official in El Salvador to Matt MacVane during the course of an interview on 21 December 1973. This was reported in MIM-006-74 4 January 1974. This report was forwarded to the El Salvador Desk on 8 January 1974. On 16 January 1974 the Desk requested that DCD obtain the name of the individual mentioned in this memorandum who said he knew a CIA officer in the Embassy. This request was passed by telecon and TWX to MacVane by [redacted] on 16 January 1974. The El Salvador Desk also questioned the reliability of our source, Joseph Merola, at this time and requested we query Miami as to his reliability. 02

2. On 17 January 1974 at the request of MacVane, [redacted] visited the El Salvador Desk to ascertain their objections to our source, known to us as a convicted felon. Desk objections stemmed from a 1964 report which indicated that Merola had informed persons that he was a "CIA agent". Further conversation elicited the fact that Merola had again made this statement in 1973 at an Embassy function. We advised the Desk that DCD was well aware of Merola's criminal background but that he had provided DCD with reliable reports in the past unrelated to his own "pursuits".

3. The El Salvador desk confirmed the fact that the individual mentioned by Merola's informant as being a CIA officer was in fact such. Ryan advised MacVane of this [redacted] telecon on 17 January 1974. MacVane and Mainwaring told [redacted] they were sending two cables relating to this case. The first would provide the name of the person who reportedly knew the CIA official. The second provided the names of two women employed in the Embassy who were reportedly involved in

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compromising situations with both Americans and local nationals. This latter cable was requested after the El Salvador desk officer advised that all avenues and possible leads were to be pursued to determine who leaked the information relating to the CIA official. These two names (phonetically spelled) were provided in the second cable by Miami. All of the information received in these cables was passed via secure phone to the El Salvador desk by [redacted] upon receipt.

4. MacVane advised [redacted] via telecon that he anticipated meeting with Joseph Merola at 1400 on 17 January to address [redacted] further matters concerned with this case. MacVane advised [redacted] that he would forward such information as soon as possible.

cc: Miami Field Office
cc: WH/2/GS
cc: Sensitive Control Officer

CB

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cc: [redacted]